

Edward Biddle House,
Mackinac Island, Michigan.

HABS No. Mich. 216

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Michigan

Historic American Buildings Survey
F. Orla Varney, District Officer
313 Garfield Bldg., Detroit, Mich.

BIDDLE HOUSE
Mackinac Island, Mackinac County
Michigan

Owner

Miss Agatha Bath, (Grand-daughter
of Edward Biddle.) Lansing, Michigan.

Date of Erection

Previous to 1800

Architect

Unknown

Builder

Unknown

Present Condition

Bad

Number of Stories

One and attic.

Materials of Construction: The house is constructed of logs with vertical members spaced according to openings and channeled to receive horizontally laid logs that were chambered and dropped into vertical channels. No nails were used but all vertical members were pegged and pinned into sill and plate. At a later time the entire building was covered with beaded siding.

Other Existing Records

Mostly tradition, old photographs and drawings.

Additional Data:

See sheet #2.

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With the abandonment of old Fort Mackinac and the building of the new fort on the Island, a few of the old buildings were taken down, drawn over the ice and re-erected on the Island. The old Catholic Church and the Mitchell home, both now destroyed, came to the Island in this manner and from un-verified sources the Biddle house was transported in the same way. Some traditions say the house was built in 1796.

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As the beginning of the work on the fort was in 1781, and the Biddle house is similar in construction and detail to the log buildings in the fort, either of these suppositions may be true.

The Biddle house, so called, did not come into the possession of Edward Biddle until 1827. At that time the building was "L" shaped, with center hall, room on each side, kitchen wing in the rear, and two attic chambers above. Biddle added a room to the Northeast side that matched in detail and construction the older building. The kitchen wing collapsed in the early part of this century, but old photographs and information found on the site, would make it possible to accurately reconstruct it.

The house contains some very interesting detail, doors, fire-place and hardware all as originally built, but badly in need of repair.

J. Orla Varnum
District Officer
June 30, 1937.

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